

December 17, 2007

Ian Bowles, Secretary
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge, 9th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Re: DCR FY09 Capital Plan- Stewardship Council Approval

Dear Secretary Bowles:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Stewardship Council has reviewed information related to DCR's 5-year capital plan as provided in M.G.L. Chapter 21 Section 2G. This correspondence is an addendum to the oversight plan which the Council has submitted to you under the requirements of the above-captioned section.

The Council finds DCR's 5-year capital plan to be deficient in two respects. First, by delaying approval DCR's FY08 Capital Plan Re-allocation request, the agency may be unable to complete the work contemplated in the reallocation request by June 30, 2008. This would affect DCR's ability to perform on the capital plans it has submitted for FY09, and it would imply that the FY09 capital budget should be increased to cover any capital expenditures related to the reallocation request not approved in FY08.

Second, ANF's approved capital budget for FY09 through FY11 under funds the annual bridge and parkway capital requirements by more than \$7.7 million each year. If DCR will be required to fund this bridge and parkway work (including engineering services, painting, repairs, resurfacing, etc.), its approved capital plan should contain sufficient funds to do so. To our knowledge, DCR is still responsible for these bridge responsibilities, and the capital plan should reflect that responsibility by providing adequate resources.

Finally, given the lack of progress made in funding an adequate system-wide analysis of capital improvement and maintenance needs, as the Council has proposed through a "gap" analysis and follow-on resource management plans, we have no way of assessing whether the proposed capital expenditures are directed at DCR's highest priorities or not.

With your help we can correct these deficiencies, and we look forward to working with you to do so.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Cross
Chairman

cc: Governor Deval Patrick
Secretary Leslie A. Kirwan
Commissioner Richard Sullivan
Legislative Parks Caucus
Stewardship Council